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ABSTRACT

This document describes and analyzes a laboratory school connected with an experimental Masters in Elementary Education program. Five areas of instructional improvement are emphasized: diagnosis, individualization, integration of the disciplines, humanistic teacher-child relationships, and teaming. Instruction focuses on the language arts. The laboratory experience was structured to bring about changes in teacher knowledge, attitudes and goals, perceptions, and behaviors related to the goal areas stated above. Instructional outcomes are described and analyzed. An evaluation of the program by the participants is appended. (Author/JD)

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SUMMER LABORATORY SCHOOL:

A DIAGNOSTIC APPROACH TO TEACHER BEHAVIOR CHANGE

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I. RELATIONSHIP TO THE FIELD-BASED MASTERS PROGRAM

The summer laboratory school was part of a two-year field-based Masters Degree Program in Elementary Education in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Virginia Currie Memorial School of Education. Sixty-five teachers employed by the Henry County school division were enrolled. Course work in elementary instruction, curriculum, and foundations of education was integrated into an experimental, integrated program, the first year emphasizing Reading, Language Arts, and Art, and the second year emphasizing Mathematics, Science, and Music. The Henry County school administration cooperated in the initial arrangements and provided extensive support throughout the program, not only with facilities, supplies, and equipment, but also with encouragement and advice.*

Each year of course work was followed by a six-week summer laboratory school providing 6 (semester hours) credit units. The laboratory school described here followed the first year of instruction, and emphasized Reading, Language Arts, and Art.

The author of this report served as Coordinator of the instructional program during the first year, Director of the summer school, and instructor in Language Arts and Art.

* Many people at the University of Virginia and in the local school division contributed to the success of this program. The original conception and negotiation of the program, the budget management, the coordination of the various units involved, the day-to-day management of resources, and the instruction were the work of a large group of people who gave generously of their talents and time.

II. LABORATORY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

Teacher Enrollment

The 65 teachers ranged in age from 25 to 53 and had taught from 2 to 20 years. There were 61 women and 4 men, and approximately one - third were black. Thirty were primary teachers; thirty-two were upper elementary. The group also included two media specialists and one speech therapist. Several teachers had taught in reading labs during the past year. Some of the upper elementary teachers had undergraduate degrees in subjects other than elementary education.

Pupil Enrollment

Approximately 200 children were drawn from the attendance areas of four elementary schools in the primarily rural eastern side of Henry County, Virginia.

Because the goals for the teachers included individualizing instruction for a wide variety of student interests and ability levels, a corresponding variety was sought in the student enrollment. No fee was charged for attending the summer school, and bussing was provided by Henry County schools. Flyers describing the school were distributed in late spring, and principals cooperated by helping to recruit the desired range of ages, sex, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

The resulting enrollment was fairly evenly spread among the grades K through 7, with approximately equal numbers of boys and girls, and black and white students. Ability levels varied widely: approximately one-half of the students tested below grade level in reading skills in the individual reading diagnostic inventory given to each child in the first week of school. Many upper elementary children tested two to four years below grade level; some were above grade level.

Schedule

The summer school program operated for six weeks. The first week was devoted to planning, teacher education, and diagnostic reading interviews. Children attended for 20 days Mondays through Thursdays for four hours a day. Teachers continued their education in workships and seminars on Fridays with the last Friday being devoted to evaluation sessions. Teachers spent at least an hour after school each day in team planning and preparation, feed-back sessions with instructors, and workshops.

Staff

The staffing of the summer school consisted of a University of Virginia Director-Instructor, two part-time instructors, a part-time assistant from the local school district (to serve as a liason with local policies and resources,) and a full-time librarian. Secretarial assistance was also available.

Facilities, Equipment and Supplies

The summer laboratory school was held in a local elementary school designed in the form of contained classrooms in a rectangle around a multi-purpose room and a media center. Most of the school space, outside play areas & furniture were available for the summer school's use.

A plentiful supply of classroom equipment and materials were available to the teachers. The University of Virginia and Henry County shared responsibility for loan and purchase of these materials. As an important extension of their training, each team of teachers had available an amount of money to spend as they wished in support of their instructional program. In addition, professional books were available for purchase or loan.

Organization of Pupil Instruction

The 65 teachers were assigned to 12 5-6 person teams in April (in a process combining their perferences and mixtures of different outlooks). Team leaders were chosen by each team after they had had experience working together during the Spring.

Beginning in late March, each team planned its own five-week program of instruction within the general guideline that they were to implement important goals and strategies they had learned during the year. There were, however, no required activities or content. As a result, each team devised very different ways of integrating language arts and the arts organized around very different themes. Some teams planned around a content theme, such as "The County Fair" or "American Indians." Other teams chose process themes, such as publishing a magazine or creating a slide tape show. Methods of individualization of instruction and teacher utilization were likewise varied, providing a rich and exciting educational environment in which the teachers learned a great deal from each other (and Instructors received needed feed back about the success of their instruction).

A Planning framework was provided which included the following steps:

1. Stating the anticipated needs, interests, and other important characteristics of the children.
2. Selecting the organizing focus or theme.
3. Stating the major learning goals in these areas:
   a. Concepts and knowledge
   b. Attitudes
   c. Thinking processes
   d. Skills (with emphasis on language)
   e. Experiences (especially creative)
4. Listing suggested learning experiences which would accomplish the goals listed in #3 according to such categories as: students will read . . ., students will construct, make, or grow, etc . . ., and students will dramatize . . .
5. Organizing the learning experiences into sequenced plans for the summer.

Each (5 or 6 person) team was assigned approximately 20 children from two different grade levels.

III. Instructional Program for Teachers in the Laboratory School

Instructional Rationale

The summer school program was planned to facilitate to the extent possible within the situational limitations a diagnostic, developmental model of teacher education. The general goal for the total two-year Masters program was to develop "proactive" teachers, who could actively shape and direct both the classroom environment and moment-to-moment classroom interaction to stimulate the full potential of each student. Derived from this general goal were five program goals which gave direction to all components of the program. Through this program the teachers would become more expert in:

1. Individualizing instruction.
2. Planning instruction based on knowledge about children and their needs.
3. Merging the content areas into interdisciplinary experiences.
4. Shaping a warm, humanistic atmosphere in the classroom.
5. Working cooperatively together with other teachers.

These goals cannot be represented by a finite set of specific behavioral end-products. They are instead broad capabilities represented by a combination of a conceptual stance associated with a variety of behaviors appropriate to different teaching situations. Such goals were suited to the purpose of the program: to develop teacher decisionmakers. They offered room for development for all of the widely differing ability levels of our teacher population as well as for all of their different teaching situations. These goals also were suitable to give direction to all of the content areas covered in the components of the program. In each component the five general teaching tasks were translated into more specific capabilities.

Because these five teaching tasks are not skills to be directly taught as such, the next step in planning was to identify the teacher characteristics and skills which would contribute to expertise in these tasks. The following areas were identified by the summer school director as being especially important to these teaching tasks and also as being within the capability of this program:

1. Attitudes and purposes - especially attitudes toward children, teacher self-concept, and instructional goals and objectives.
2. Knowledge about children, instructional content and instructional methods.
3. Perceptions - what teachers actually perceive as significant as they carry out instruction and plan for instruction.

4. Behavioral competencies, such as relatively objective on-going observations of children, motivation of children, management of several concurrent activities in the classroom.

The structure of the summer school was then designed to provide conditions in which this particular set of teachers could make demonstratable progress from their present capabilities in the areas stated above.

The diagnostic information needed to make these plans primarily came from the instructors' contact with students in the previous two semesters of course work. Several more formal surveys were also available, and the director had visited almost all the teachers in their classrooms. Most of the diagnostic information was, because of the nature of these contacts, limited to information about the first two areas, attitudes and purposes and knowledge. Information available to instructors about teachers' perceptions and behavioral competencies was limited. So, armed with this information and teachers'statements of what they wanted to learn, a partially open-ended structure was planned for the summer with provision for continual on-going diagnostic feed-back for instructors.

*An Art Attitude and Experience Survey, a Language Arts Pre and Post Test, and a "Classroom Log" report of one selected hour of instruction. numerical summary data was available only for the Language Arts Test.

FACULTY

The faculty of the Summer Laboratory School were one full-time instructor (also the director) and two part-time instructors. All three of these summer instructors had also taught the teachers during the previous two semesters course work, and one had visited almost all the teachers in their classrooms. This continuing contact was an important factor in enabling the instructors to use a diagnostic, developmental approach in the summer school.

In addition to these faculty, several consultants worked with the teachers, and the librarian provided instruction in the use of audio-visual materials.

Instructional Requirements

The laboratory experience represented in the minds of the teachers, and in reality, both an opportunity for instructional improvement and a requirement for completion of the Masters Degree. The instructional requirements were planned to meet both of these criteria. They allowed instructors to make judgments about the accomplishments of teachers; they provided a structure in which teachers could try out and perfect new skills; and the fact that they were developmental in nature helped to reduce the

conflict between pursuit of instructional improvement and anxiety about meeting requirements.

The following were major requirements for the teachers:

1. Planning and carrying out an individualized interdisciplinary instructional program that was responsive to to children's needs and interests. The primary expectation for the teachers was that they plan and carry out the approaches to instruction which they had been studying during the year. Taking into account the individual differences in teaching ability within the group, summer teaching requirements were developmental in nature, based on expectations of progress rather than accomplishment of a pre-determined set of competencies. Criteria for success were thoroughness of planning, willingness to experiment and change, and ability to use valid instructional concepts in planning and evaluating instruction, rather than "success" in any one sequence of instruction. Daily observations and discussions plus weekly written reports provided the contact necessary for such a developmental approach.

2. Participating in team planning and teaching. A discussion of this aspect of the summer is provided below.

3. Weekly reports. These reports included: a)overall reaction to the week, b) analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of team planning and teaching, with suggestions for improvement, c) list of new (to the teacher) teaching strategies undertaken that week, d) analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of two selected activities, with suggestions for improvement, and e) suggestions for the staff concerning improvements in organization, etc. Reports were confidential, shared with staff only.

4. A Case study, emphasizing in-school observational information along with recommendations for future instruction based on check-lists for student growth in oral and written language.

Evaluation and Feedback by Instructors

Of highest priority was the establishment of a supportive, non-competitive atmosphere. The teachers in the program had little or no experience with objective observation and feedback. Many were very insecure about their teaching skills. Profound anxieties are generated when such teachers are asked to demonstrate new and complex behavioral skills under the watchful eye of an evaluator.

This anxiety often leads to common problems of laboratory schools: teachers will fall back on the security of known techniques rather than venturing into the dangerous, unknown arena of new strategies in order to avoid the public failure that will result. Or they will exhaust themselves with a thoughtless rush of new activities in order to impress the evaluators.

Several aspects of the evaluation and feedback procedures in the summer laboratory school allowed the instructors to provide the necessary encouragement and support. The Pass-Fail grading system held the teachers to a certain level of achievement, but, without the competition for "As", teachers were willing to risk experimentation and help and encourage their teammates.

Instructors observed and commented informally and constantly, beginning with positive feedback and moving slowly into suggestions for improvement. Observations were arranged in advance with each team. In addition, instructors "dropped in" from time to time to keep in touch or to see something special. Teachers were encouraged to ask for observation when they had questions about a new strategy and were praised when they used the instructors in this way. It was important to the teachers that the instructors observed them when they felt they were at their best as well as when they needed help. An important ingredient of this process was that the instructors were competent teachers themselves, and were able to give both practical and conceptual help as needed. As teachers perceived that they received help rather than criticism when they exposed a weakness, they gained confidence in themselves and the observers.

In general, a feedback approach was used in follow-up conferences. The instructor reported, "I saw...," then the team and instructor discussed what that information means in terms of intended outcomes.

Teaming and Large Group Decision-Making

Planning and teaching in teams was a new experience for almost all of the teachers in the program. The process of teaming thus was for most of the teachers the most unfamiliar aspect of the summer and the aspect that engaged their attention and emotions most deeply.

Assistance was given the teams by staff, beginning with a workshop in the spring and continuing with individual help and group sessions in the summer. Alternative methods of organizing group planning and teaching were presented and discussed. Teams chose plans which suited their personalities and instructional programs. Personal development and communication barrier-breaking were important aspects of teaming workshops.

Team leaders were chosen by each team toward the end of the spring. Their role was one of organizer, arbitrator, and facilitator, not autocratic decision-maker. Teams met formally twice a week during the summer, and informally as needed.

Large group decision-making of the kind needed for teacher involvement in whole school planning was also a new experience for most of the teachers.

In order to give them experience and guidance in large group decision-making, the teachers were asked as a total group to make many decisions affecting the summer school e.g., standards for student behavior, arrangements for the use of special rooms, setting up communication patterns). Either the staff or a teacher raised a question. Then a four-step decision-making procedure which combined efficiency with democratic participation was used:

The entire group:

1. Discussed relevant points relating to the decision, a and
2. Shared opinions (everyone was asked to state which alternatives were acceptable and/or preferred by a show of hands). Then a committee:
3. Worked out details of the actual decision, and annouced it. After a trial period, the whole group:
4. Had the opportunity to change the decision, using steps 1, 2, and 3 above as needed.

Workshops and Demonstrations

Opportunity was provided for teachers to gain additional expertise in areas left underdeveloped by the previous two semesters of course work. Some of these were rather simple practical skills such as binding children's work into permanent books, mastering A V. equipment, and building cardboard furniture. Other areas were more complex, and a series of workshop sessions were provided for them. Reading specialists led a four day workshop on informal reading inventory interviews, including a demonstration interview, interviews of all children in the summer school, and follow-up discussions of the implications of this information. A highlight of the summer was the week a creative dramatics consultant spent with the school, giving workshops in every classroom and with teacher groups, as well as providing individual help. Developmental reading instruction and classroom management each drew a highly motivated group, who met after hours to combine general learning with discussion of specific problems. Practice was also offered in several methods of naturalistic classroom observation.

In addition to these structured, large group sessions, individual help was given in all areas of curriculum planning and instruction.

IV. OUTCOMES OF THE SUMMER LABORATORY SCHOOL

The outcomes of the summer experience and their relationship to the structure of the school will be discussed in terms of the four areas of change specified in planning the program (attitudes and purposes, knowledge, perceptions, behavioral competencies). The conclusions drawn in this section are those of the director, based on the instructors' observations, conversations with teachers, the teachers' weekly written reports, and anonomous teacher evaluations of the program. (A summary of these evaluations is in the Appendix.)

Knowledge. During the summer only a few areas of new information were introduced to the teachers, matters of practical detail in the use of materials and classroom management. The summer laboratory experience did, however, apparently serve as a vehicle for bringing classroom knowledge up to a usable level of consciousness. In the planning period prior to the beginning of summer school, most of the teachers were able to state only vague ideas of what they wanted to accomplish instructionally. They tended to jump from general goals to lists of activities and subjects. As the summer continued, plans became more detailed, and teachers were able to state a specific set of language goals for the children in their case studies. Awareness of the need to know more detailed steps in the acquisition of language was frequently expressed.

It should be noted that the fund of knowledge acquired during the two semesters of classwork was, in the minds of the instructors, an important foundation for the success of the summer experience. Teachers knew the rationale for the strategies they were trying and had a fund of alternatives to draw upon for their experimentation. Their understanding of child development and the nature of learning, and, specifically, language development and learning, seemed to be especially beneficial.

Attitudes and Purposes. The contribution of this program to teachers' attitudes and purposes seemed to be more in the nature of extension and reinterpretation, rather than in the creation of new attitudes. In general, teachers already possessed basic beliefs about teaching and children which supported the goals of the program. Through their year's classwork, new information about children, strategies of teaching, and activist models of the teacher role extended these ideas. Most of the teachers expressed acceptance of most of these new ideas and tried portions of them in their classrooms. Some took issue on occasion, a stance which was encouraged by the instructors. The role of the summer laboratory school in shaping attitudes appeared to be to

submit these verbally learned attitudes to the crucible of experience. The weekly reports indicated that specific failures and successes experienced by the teachers or observed by them stimulated much rethinking of their beliefs about teaching.

Instructionally, the following ideas all appeared to be viewed more positively: active participation by children, choices by children, individualization of skill learning, developmental approaches to skill learning, positive approaches to behavior control, integration of subject matter, cooperative projects, art projects, original writing and oral expression of ideas.

The exuberant planning of new classroom environments and strategies and the many expressions of frustration with their own schools' restrictions indicated that at least some of the teachers were expanding their concept of the teacher role. Attitudes toward teaming became overall more positive, but larded with some reservations (see later sections).

Perceptions. The term "perceptions" is used here to refer to the junction of thinking and sensory intake. The perceptions of teachers of concern to this program were the junction of what the teachers saw and thought as they actually taught and also as they planned for teaching. Teacher perceptions are a complex and elusive phenomenon, difficult to observe and describe. Although perceptual psychology is a well-developed area of study, teacher perceptions have received virtually no attention. Instructional research has skipped from knowledge and attitudes to behaviors. Nevertheless, these perceptions were viewed by the director as the crucial link between the knowledge and attitudes learned by the teachers in their classwork and their actual classroom teaching behaviors. If the program were to result in changed behaviors, it must do so by raising knowledge to a usable level, i.e., integrated into the teachers' actual instructional perceptions. The summer laboratory school was viewed as a crucial vehicle to bring about these changes and much of the structure provided for the teachers was planned to this end.

The conclusions reported here about changes in teacher perceptions are simply comparisons between what teachers wrote and said about their teaching prior to the summer (during classroom work and during instructors' visits to their schools) and what was written and said during the summer school. Some teachers commented directly on changes of perception, others revealed them by reporting what they observed about children or by what they said during planning sessions. For all teachers, weekly reports, planning outlines, feedback sessions, and final evaluations (anonomous) were available. Most of these sources of evidence are, of course, not perceptions themselves but indicators of them, and are also drawn from a situation which, even though permissive and flexible, is still colored by the desire to please instructors.

Some major categories of perceptions that were important to the goals of the program were:

1. Perceptions about children. Most teachers entering this program tended to perceive children rather narrowly, in terms of static, global perceptions, such as "respectful/not respectful" and "can learn quickly/cannct learn quickly," or in terms of amount of knowledge acquired. They thought about these behaviors as they planned and taught, and they saw these behaviors when they observed children. It was expected that teachers would during the summer expand this perceptual framework to include more complex, developmental perceptions of children--interests, cognitive modes, developmental levels (emotional, cognitive, and social), talents, and motives. Teachers believed that they learned more about children in the summer (85% reported that they learned "much" or "very much") and our indicators agreed with this.

The diagnostic reading inventory interviews, the practice in making detailed classroom observations, and the case study appeared to be of benefit, and teachers agreed with this in their evaluations (approximately 75% reporting these experiences "valuable" or "very valuable"). There was a circular reaction between learning new aspects of the nature of children and seeing the observable indicators of them--the more they knew, the more they saw, and vice versa.

2. Perceptions about the role of the teacher. As discussed more fully in the section on teaching behaviors below, most of the teachers were very personally involved in, and some threatened by, the demands of teacher cooperation in teaming. Some teachers initially expressed doubts about their own adequacy as a result of conflicts with others in the group; a few seemed to be left with continuing doubts. Most were strengthened in their feelings of adequacy after solving group problems, but some had to change some of their behaviors before gaining that confidence. In their instructional role, some teachers commented about the pleasure they felt about overcoming their fears of trying out an uncertain teaching idea in front of observers. The strong involvement of their perceptions of themselves was evident in teachers' final evaluations: 94% rated "self-knowledge" as an important outcome of the summer.

In terms of perceiving themselves as activist teachers, it was difficult to determine what kinds of changes were taking place. As a whole, the group did seem to become more ready to make decisions for themselves rather than asking higher authorities, but this may have been a result of becoming familiar with the authority system of the summer school. It was the opinion of the instructors that the teachers who made the least progress in instructional expertise were also those who tended to perceive themselves as responders rather than decision-makers.

3. Perceptions about Instruction. It was expected that teachers would develop perceptions about methods of using resources, methods of talking and listening, testing, etc., which would support a viable individualized, interdisciplinary, humanistic, program of instruction. As noted in the earlier sections, teacher plans and reports showed some movement from rather vague, diffuse perceptions of instructional strategies to more complex, detailed thinking.

At the beginning of the summer, teachers tended to attend to situational factors such as ventilation and space, to the attention span of children, and to immediate instructional goals such as whether the children could or could not complete the assigned task. Toward the end of the summer, teachers were attending to more subtle aspects of their own behavior (how they had introduced or structured the activity, how much direction they had given) and were beginning to make connections between these actions and more varied and more long-term goals such as problem-solving, self-concept, and responsibility for independent work. Skill learning began to be seen more in terms of development rather than immediate response. A number of teachers expressed satisfaction at being able to think of strategies to meet previously frustrating situations; others expressed the need for even more help in this area.

Some perceptual categories which these teachers listed as new to them were: contracts; directed reading-thinking activities; Language Experience Approach; recreational, instructional, and frustration levels of reading; initial concept learning vs. follow-up reinforcement; language differences vs. language deficiencies; oral preparation for writing; writing as communication; and initial concept learning vs. follow-up reinforcement.

Behavioral competencies. The summer laboratory school achieved its major aim in providing a setting which enabled teachers to experiment with new diagnostic, individualized, interdisciplinary, and humanistic strategies of instruction. The results were dramatic, colorful, and often exhilarating to the children and to the teachers themselves. Teachers who had never taught in any manner except lecture or "question-and-answer" or "round-robin-read" (mostly upper elementary) supervised poetry writing, race car construction, debates, group problem-solving, and magazine-editing--sometimes all at one time. Teachers who had depended on "three levels of ability" grouping patterns (mostly primary) organized contracts, free-flow activity periods, and individualized reading programs. Teachers who had previously depended on verbal transmission extended their instruction into a variety of audio-visual and experiential strategies.

The following special events, for example, were recorded on one day: two classes went on field trips; an African prince, a state senator, and a mobile radio unit visited the school; a

play-in barn and teepee were constructed; there were two plays and one debate; jam, ice cream, and cookies were made; and a student program went out over the public address system. Language arts was freed from the textbook and the ditto. Children were discussing, writing, and reading about their own experiences or about new and interesting learning. They accomplished an impressive amount of work--magazines, newspapers, plays, poems, constructions, etc.--at an impressive level of maturity.

Teachers also exhibited behavioral changes in three areas supportive of their actual instruction. They learned to conduct informal diagnostic reading interviews and how to make increasingly objective naturalistic observations of children. They also became quite inventive in creating informal environments to support their instructional programs. Desks were rather quickly replaced by rugs, tri-ply cardboard units, lunchroom tables, easels, bathtubs, and even a refrigerator.

The teachers themselves felt that they were making progress. In their evaluations, 97% reported that they felt the summer overall to be "very valuable or valuable" in helping them improve their teaching. They felt that they made the most progress in learning to design the physical environment and help children be actively involved in instruction (both 91% "learned very much or much"). Managing several different activities at once was thought to be more difficult (74% "very much or much").

Increased competency in establishing a warm, humanistic atmosphere was very evident in the school. The changes that resulted in the children's behavior were especially dramatic because the request for children in all ability levels and the free bus transportation had encouraged parents to send a considerable number of reluctant and even disruptive students, as was evident the first two days in a certain amount of scuffling, belligerence, and refusal to participate. How to deal with these frustrated and turned-off learners was the subject of much discussion during the beginning of school. Many teachers were reluctant to abandon negative tactics such as isolation which they felt would at least keep children under control.

Instructors discussed alternatives with the teachers, encouraging them to connect what they had learned about children's needs and developmental characteristics to these troublesome children. Teachers worked to increase their ability to listen to children, to leave them alone to carry out projects (very difficult at first), to help them express their own ideas, and to involve them in class planning.

They gave the children satisfying responsibilities and helped them find work at their level of competence. In this interesting, benevolent atmosphere the children's negativism melted away, an impressive reinforcement for the teachers' efforts to change their instructional strategies. Their weekly written reports and discussions with observers reflected these efforts, as did their final evaluations (95% "learned very much or much" about "helping children to feel good about themselves.").

The extent of growth made in all these competencies varied greatly. A few teachers accomplished rather complete creative, integrated programs of instruction. Others labored to acquire basic skills such as following through on requests and giving clear directions. Most teachers fell in between these extremes. They worked at their own level of need.

In general, teachers made progress in carrying out new instructional strategies during the six weeks of summer school. It was more difficult for them to integrate optimum skill learning into the activities, and to sequence and pace the activities into a meaningful language arts program. Each of the questions on the final evaluations related to planning a well-designed individualized program received approximately 85% responses of "learned very much or much".

Teaming was another area in which the instructor's observations and the teachers' weekly reports provided dramatic evidence that extensive behavioral changes had taken place. Only one teacher had previously worked in a team situation. Teams began planning during the spring, and even before summer school opened, some teachers were expressing private doubts about the possibility of successful teaming. During the first two weeks of teaching, crises arose in about half the teams. Much of the energy of these teams went into solving their team problems. By the end of the summer major problems had been either overcome or controlled, and the formerly naive teachers had gained considerable insight into the benefits and frustrations of teacher cooperation.

The teams, in general, found it relatively easy to work out an acceptable organization of responsibilities from the choices presented to them. They were encouraged to try several different organizational plans during the summer.

Communicating different points of view, however, was more difficult. Often the problem was merely expressing different ideas; at other times more basic philosophical differences were involved, such as the amount of time and effort a teacher should put into teaching or the choice of experiential vs. didactic teaching strategies. Expressing disagreement was difficult for these teachers, most of whom were southern women who had been brought up to avoid even minor social offense.

Instructors offered various kinds of help, from communication games to Kleenex. Assistance generally fell into three categories:

1. Defusing emotions. Helping an individual feel that he/she was not a hopeless fool for believing in his/her point of view, or helping an individual feel that another person was not a hopeless fool for believing in his/her point of view;

2. Speaking out. Helping a group talk about differences openly, specifically, and matter-of-factly, without ignoring the less dominent members (a game framework was sometimes of great help in getting this started).

3. Making progress. Helping a group move quickly into solutions, rather than floundering in indecision.

The teachers' final evaluations reflected positive but uneven feelings about the success of their teaming. They apparently felt most successful in the instructional aspect of teaming (94% "learned very much or much"). Learning to communicate received 86% similar responses and the total planning process a lower 77%.

Having help available when needed from the instructors was important to this process, and the non-threatening evaluative structure of the summer was similarly important in making this helping relationship possible. It appeared that as teachers' perceptions of instruction increased in complexity, they were better able to express their points of view and also were better able to define conflicts professionally, resulting in greater ease in resolving conflicts. And, as might be predicted, teams whose members had close agreement in basic purposes and goals found conflict resolution easier.

V. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

1. The field-based nature of this program was important to its success in effecting instructional change. Separate course structures were broken down into integrated study where this was helpful. The close connection between theory and practice seemed to accomplish what neither course work nor laboratory experience alone could have accomplished.

2. Teachers needed extensive help in learning supporting skills such as diagnostic techniques, curriculum planning, and classroom management, in order to be able to put into practice the individualized, humanistic teaching strategies asked of them in the laboratory school. They also needed on-the-spot help with specific problems. Without this support, this would have been a frustrating experience of failure for many of the teachers.

3. The responsibility of decision-making placed on the teacher contributed to their becoming active problem-solvers. If they had been asked to demonstrate a set of specific instructional strategies, they would not have been prepared to solve the type of problems they would meet when trying to implement these strategies in their own classrooms later.

4. For teachers new to teaming, the requirement to work in teams might have been an intolerable burden for some without the support and help from instructors. A laboratory school which introduces teaming to teachers should be prepared to give attention to the interpersonal relationships involved.

5. The developmental requirements and low-threat evaluative structure encouraged teachers to work at their own level and reduced the fear of asking for help.

6. The multi-age grouping of children in each class and recruitment of a wide range of ability levels was an asset in heightening awareness of individual differences.

7. Placing teachers in teams not only provided the material for learning about teaming, but also introduced the benefits of group life: sharing, psychological support, exchange of skills and ideas, and a heightened energy level.

8. For teachers seeking improvements in as many areas of instruction and planning as this program dealt with, two separate laboratory experiences are desirable. This first experience enabled teachers to solve basic problems of team cooperation and make a beginning in the use of new instructional strategies. The next summer, though emphasizing a new content area, enabled the teachers to considerably deepen their instructional capability.

APPENDIX:

Henry County Summer School

1976

Summary of Teacher Evaluations of Summer Program:

Percentage of Teachers Responding to Each Alternative for Each Item

A. OVER-ALL EVALUATION OF SUMMER PROGRAM

Teachers rated the following items from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (Strongly disagree):

	Percentage of Teachers*					
	Strongly Agree 5	4	3	2	Strongly Disagree 1	No AnSwer
1. I was stimulated to do my best work.	47.5	43	9.5	0	0	0
2. The summer experience was useful to help improve my teaching in the regualr classroom.	69	28	3	0	0	0

B. EVALUATION OF SELECTED ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM

Teachers rated the following items according to these instructions: Indicate the amount each item listed below contributed to your learning this summer. Think not only about your teaching ability, but also your ability to evaluate your teaching and your ability to communicate ideas. 5 = the highest evaluation (very valuable) and 1 = the lowest evaluation (little or no value).

	Percentage of Teachers*					
	Very Valuable 5	4	3	2	Little or No Value 1	No Answer
1. Watching other teachers.	51.5	33	15.5	0	0	0
2. Discussing and planning with other teachers.	51.5	31	14	3	0	0
3. Analyzing my team efforts in my diary.	26.5	39	31	1.5	1.5	0
4. Analyzing my new teaching techniques in my diary.	26.5	45.5	25	1.5	1.5	0
5. Completing a case study of one child.	31	44	19	4.5	1.5	0
6. Reporting on another room	29.5	33	29.5	8	0	0
7. Observations and follow-up discussions by UVa instructors (Busching, Powell, Mitchell).	40.5	47	12.5	0	0	0

* N = 64

	Percentage of Teachers*					
	Very Valuable				Little or No Value	No Answer
8. Informal discussions with UVa insturctors.	39	47	11	1.5	1.5	0
9. Teaching demonstrations by UVa instructors (Powell and Branyon).	78	22	0	0	0	0
10. Afternoon and Friday Workshops.	14	50	31	1.5	1.5	1.5
11. A-V equipment instruction by librarian.	15.5	22	29.5	17	11	4.5
12.. Reserve Library and materials from UVa.	17	45	29.5	1.5	3	3
13. The Diagnostic Reading Inventory Interviews.	42	36	17	4.5	0	0

Teachers rated the following items from 5(excellent) to 1(very poor):

	Percentage of Teachers*					
	Excellent 5	4	3	2	Very Poor 1	No Answer
1. Length of the teaching day.	25	19	31	14	8	3
2. Over-all scheduling of the summer.	25	40.5	23.5	9	1.5	0
3. Fairness of evaluation and grading by instructors (Primarily Busching).	75	19	4.5	1.5	0	0
4. Availability of materials and supplies.	54.5	19	17	0	1.5	8
5. UVa instructors showed understanding and support.	78	20.5	1.5	0	0	0
6. UVa instructors were able to give specific help when needed.	54.5	42	1.5	1.5	0	0

* N = 64

C. EVALUATION OF PROGRESS MADE RELATED TO PROGRAM GOALS

Teachers rated the following items related to overall goals for the two-year Masters Degree Program from 5(learned very much) to 1(learned very little or none):

	Percentage of Teachers*					
	Learned Very Much			Learned Very Little or None		No Answer
	5	4	3	2	1	
1. Teacher communication and cooperation:						
a. Sharing materials and teaching ideas with other teachers.	60	34	4.5	1.5	0	0
b. Sharing the instruction of a group of children with other teachers.	51	43	4.5	1.5	0	0
c. Planning for the instruction of a group of children with other teachers.	49	27.5	21.5	1.5	0	0
d. Communicating with other teachers.	49	37	10.5	0	1.5	1.5
2. Individualization:						
a. Altering the physical environment of the classroom to meet different instructional needs.	54	38	7.5	0	0	0
b. Helping children to be actively involved in instruction (making decisions, thinking, creative activity, concrete activity)	52.5	38.5	7.5	1.5	0	0
c. Managing several different activities at one time.	35.5	38.5	18.5	4.5	1.5	1.5
3. Child-centered Planning:						
a. Finding out the different interests, skill levels, and special characteristics of the children.	58.5	26	13.5	1.5	0	0
b. Planning instruction to fit the different interests, skill levels, and special characteristics of the children.	47.5	37	14	1.5	0	0
c. Being able to explain the reasons why an activity is valuable for a child.	35.5	47.5	15.5	0	0	0
4. Positive Classroom Environment:						
a. Helping children to have positive feelings about themselves.	66	29	1.5	3	0	0
5. Self-Knowledge:						
a. Learning about yourself: your strengths, weaknesses, and preferences.	74	20	4.5	0	0	1.5

*N = 64